India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

It may be worth while to recur to some of the rather curious statements made by Sir Henry Fowler on February 25 last in his speech on Mr. Caine's amendment to the Address. Sir H. Fowler described himself as the "parent and author" of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, and added:—

> He founded it, not as his hon. friend the member for Manchester seemed to think, as a result of a House of Commons debate, but because he was satisfied, as Secretary of State for India, that the financial relations then existing between the Exchequers of this country and of India were not upon a satisfactory basis.

Sir Henry Fowler, it is to be feared, is a little forgetful. In the Parliament of 1892-1895 the Indian Parliamentary Committee continually endeavoured to secure an enquiry into the condition of India upon the model of the "stock-takings" which automatically preceded the renewal of the East India Company's charter. To pass over earlier efforts in the same Parliament, on August 14, 1894, Mr. Samuel Smith, who was seconded by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, moved the following amendment to the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts:—

> That in the opinion of this House a full and independent Parliamentary enquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of government in India.

Now, Sir Henry (then Mr.) Fowler was at that time Secretary of State for India and, far from supporting this amendment, he described the speeches of the mover and the seconder as "a very strong indictment of the British government of India." In a long speech he sought to answer the indictment, and wound up with an offer of compromise in these terms:—

> What I would suggest to my hon. friend—as his motive and that of the Government are the same, namely to bring about a more efficient and economical administration in India, and to let the people in India know that for every sovereign spent they get twenty shillings value—what I would suggest would be that he should withdraw his motion, and I will undertake on the part of the Government that at the very commencement of next Session we will propose the appointment of a Select Committee which will enquire into the financial expenditure of the Indian revenues both in England and in India.

It was afterwards decided that a Royal Commission would be a more convenient instrument of enquiry than a Select Committee, and in the following year Lord Welby's Commission was appointed. Such was the genesis of the enquiry. Mr. Naoroji and his friends had asked for enquiry before Mr. Fowler became Secretary for India; they pressed for it again a few months after his appointment to the India Office; he granted one-third of the proposed enquiry on the condition that they withdrew a motion which they were prepared to support in force in the division lobby; and now he describes himself as the father of the Commission. Clearly a bad case of forgetfulness. Or was it only a slip of the tongue? Perhaps Sir Henry Fowler really meant to say "step-father."

But Sir Henry Fowler, ignoring the well-known maxim, goes further and gives his reason. He founded the Commission "not as a result of a House of Commons debate, but because he was satisfied, as Secretary of State for India, that the financial relations then existing between the Exchequers of this country and of India were not upon a satisfactory basis." Here, we fear, is more forgetfulness. For what did he say at the time? A little lower down in the speech from which we have just quoted we find him commending the limited sort of enquiry which was to be the price of the withdrawal of the motion on the ground that such an enquiry

> would, I think, clear up some of the charges of extravagance which have been made against the Government of India.

His speech had been an elaborate defence of the Government of India against the "very strong indictment" of Mr. Smith and Mr. Naoroji, and the effect of the enquiry, apparently, would be to make the defence complete. Nor is that all. At the beginning of the following Session (February 12, 1895) Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji moved an amendment to the Address, praying for an equitable adjustment of the "financial relations between the United Kingdom and British India." In the course of the discussion the following conversation occurred:—

> Mr. Fowler: The amendment asks me to direct an apportionment of certain military charges between England and India.
>
> Mr. Naoroji: Not merely the military charges but also the home charges.
>
> Mr. Fowler: Well, I am sorry there is not the common ground between my friend and myself that I thought there was. I know of no case being made out in reference to the home charges.

Yet Sir Henry Fowler was then on the eve of appointing a Royal Commission because he was satisfied that the "financial relations then existing between the Exchequers of this country and of India were not upon a satisfactory basis."

We pass to another point. Sir Henry Fowler in his speech of February 25 had the courage to assert that there was not a single question of Indian policy raising any issue of vital importance which the House of Commons had not had "the opportunity of fully discussing and finally deciding." We mentioned last week various Indian questions, raising issues of vital importance, which the House of Commons had neither fully discussed nor finally decided. Let us now recall three such questions from the period during which Sir Henry Fowler himself was Secretary for India. There is (1) the case of Chitral. No sooner had the ill-starred operations connected with that name begun than members of the House of Commons who knew a great deal more about methods of "forward" frontier policy than Sir Henry Fowler did began to put questions designed to secure that what started as a relief expedition should not end in an occupation. They might as well have put questions to the Sphinx. Week after week and month after month went by, and Sir Henry Fowler would neither vouchsafe information nor present papers. At length, on May 30, 1895, we find the following question and answer recorded:—

> Sir William Wedderburn asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, before taking action as regards Chitral affairs, her Majesty's Government would afford the House an opportunity of expressing its views on the subject.
>
> The Chancellor of the Exchequer: Of course the question with reference to Chitral is a very grave one. The Government are not able at present to make a statement on the subject, but when a policy is decided on the House will certainly be informed of it.

Here, then, was a question of Indian policy admittedly raising an issue of vital importance. Yet the House of Commons, far from "fully discussing and finally deciding" it, was not to be allowed to discuss it at all until it had been decided. The fatal policy of secrecy and procrastination was persisted in, with the results which we know. It was not until Lord Rosebery's Government had resolved to resign that it hurriedly announced, at the eleventh hour, its determination not to occupy Chitral. But no papers had been presented, the House of Commons had had no

opportunity of discussing the matter, and Lord Salisbury's Government, when it took office, had no difficulty in reversing the belated decision of its predecessors. Not for some time afterwards was discussion permitted, and discussion was then academic, as Chitral in the meantime had been occupied and the "forward" school had triumphed. When papers were at length presented, they were presented (and sub-edited) by Lord George Hamilton and his friends. And this brings us to (2) the case of Waziristan. For the editors of the papers presented to Parliament took care to include dispatches which showed, for the first time, that Sir Henry Fowler had sanctioned a "forward" movement in Waziristan in spite of a dissenting minute signed by Sir Charles Pritchard, Sir James Westland, and Sir Antony MacDonnell. This was a revelation, we believe, not merely to the House of Commons, but even to some, at any rate, of Sir Henry Fowler's colleagues in Lord Rosebery's Cabinet. Who will suggest that the House of Commons had an opportunity of "fully discussing and finally deciding" that vital matter?

But there was (3) one question of Indian policy raising an issue of vital importance which the House of Commons did fully discuss and believed—though quite wrongly—that it had finally decided. We mean the question of Simultaneous Examinations for the Indian Civil Service. The House of Commons, after full discussion, recorded its decision upon that matter in 1893 in a formal Resolution, to which it was the duty of the Government to give effect. But the Government, through Sir Henry Fowler, evaded and ignored it, and from that time dates a marked decline in the authority of Parliament where India is concerned. Now it is an arguable proposition—with which, indeed, Sir Henry Fowler often appears to display no little sympathy—that the work of government must be carried on in India without interference from Parliament. The proposition may be, as we believe it is, repugnant to the spirit of the British Constitution, and, if it be long maintained in act, fraught with grave perils to popular institutions at home. But it is not far removed from the present practice, of which there could be no greater travesty than to say as Sir Henry Fowler does that "there is not a single question of Indian policy raising any issue of vital importance which the House of Commons has not the opportunity of fully discussing and finally deciding."

The sittings of the Famine Commission were resumed at Ahmedabad on February 7. The first witness, Colonel Clarkson, Sanitary Commissioner, Bombay Presidency, attributed the great mortality to debility due to the lack of food or the bad food in the early stages of the famine. The next witness was a very important one, Mr. Lely, the Commissioner of the Northern Division of Gujerat. He declared that the district, in spite of two good years immediately preceding, had not at the beginning of the famine fully recovered from the short crops of several previous years. Sugar and cotton, the two crops sown for money, had fallen in price. The soil, he believed, was less productive than formerly, at all events in the Broach district, partly owing to the excessive growth of cotton. The habits of the people had become more expensive, and with the introduction of railways the storage of grain had ceased, though the absence of famine in Gujerat for some time might have contributed to this.

In Gujerat, Mr. Lely agreed, the cultivators invested their savings in cattle. Their first object was to preserve their cattle, and for that end they got rid of their ornaments and their household utensils. It had even been stated that the rafters of their houses were sold while there was a chance of preserving their animals, and that for the sake of their animals they kept away from the relief works. But the cultivators pinched themselves to no purpose. Seventy per cent. of the cattle died. From the time the rain failed the people got rid of all they had in order to save their cattle: when the cattle were gone, all was gone. Mr. Lely, asked among whom the distress first showed itself, answered:—

> It showed first on the fringe of the population in every village—those who lived on the villager, such as the village servants, the beggars, and so on; then came the lower class of labourers, next the permanent labourers, the lower class of cultivators, and gradually the better class of cultivators were hit.

But perhaps the most striking portion of Mr. Lely's evidence was that relating to the suspension of revenue. In ordinary times there could be no suspension for a failure of the crops. In famine there might be. He proposed to suspend forty-five lakhs of rupees out of ninety-eight lakhs, or nearly forty-five per cent. The Government considered twenty per cent. suspension enough, and sent back his estimates for revision. Mr. Lely's "revised" estimate was the same as his earlier one—a suspension of forty-five per cent. The Government also stuck to their estimate, and so during the financial year 1899-1900 an attempt had to be made to collect eighty per cent. of the revenue. Meanwhile, no notification was given that even twenty per cent. of the land revenue would be remitted; and so during the worst period of the famine the cultivators were left under the impression that they would have to bear the full assessment.

But the result was to fulfil, and more than fulfil, Mr. Lely's expectations. In the financial year beginning in March, 1900, the Collectors, under the general orders of the Government, made enquiries as to what the people could pay. These enquiries were completed in June, and it was agreed that the results of the enquiries should be made known, and where the people could not pay the revenue should be suspended. The Government had already declared that no one should be encumbered as to their cattle and utensils, and they had appealed to the enquiry to show which estimate of suspension—their own of twenty per cent. or Mr. Lely's of forty-five per cent.—was accurate. The result was that *seventy-two* per cent. could not be collected; there was a practical suspension of seventy-two per cent.

Mr. Lely held very strongly that suspension should have taken place early and without waiting for an enquiry. As a result of the delay 162,192 acres were formally forfeited, some having to be given back before the rains. During practically the whole period of famine the people were left under the impression that they would have to pay the whole revenue; whether they believed this or not, it was kept hanging over their heads. Later in the course of his evidence, Mr. Lely said:—

> Our staff was absolutely inadequate to deal with the Bhils. If we had extended gratuitous relief, the failure would have been still greater. There is worse even than starvation, and that is the extinction of self-reliance and self-respect in a people.

This drew from the President a very strong expression of opinion:—

> I don't agree with you. The object of famine relief is to save life, and look out afterwards for demoralisation.

Two contradictory views put forward with great clearness.

A point on which some difference of opinion was apparent among the witnesses was the extent to which the relief works were resorted to by fugitives from the Native States. Mr. Lely said that the difficulties of relief were "enormously increased by the great influx from the Native States." Mr. A. L. P. Tucker, Commissioner of Ajmere-Merwara, said that as many as 20,000 were counted in one day on one road making their way to Malwa and the North-West Provinces. Some of these returned in an emaciated condition. Many were from Native States. On the other hand, Major Dunlop Smith, C.I.E., late Famine Commissioner in Rajputana, did not believe that the number of foreigners (*i.e.*, immigrants from Native States) on the relief works exceeded five per cent. He thought that those who had come from *istamrari* villages were mistaken for foreigners. Major Dunlop Smith added that when works were once established in Native States they were well managed, and he was surprised at the large percentage of their resources which the States had spent in giving relief.

These latter witnesses were examined at Ajmere. One of the most interesting who there gave evidence was the Famine Secretary for the State of Jodhpur. He told how the loss of cattle was from 80 to 90 per cent. The hides of 14 lakhs of cattle were exported, apart from those which died by the roadside. In Jodhpur, the Bunnias formed a clique to raise prices, but the Durbar put a stop to this by opening cheap grain shops. He calculated that it would take Marwar ten years to recover from this

famine, even if another did not intervene. The President thanked the Pandit at the conclusion of his evidence.

The Coopers Hill Blue-book exposes the absurdity of the management of the institution. Colonel Ottley was appointed President in June, 1900, and after seven months' investigation he concluded that the existing system left much to be desired and that a better education could be given at less cost. His conclusions in detail were substantially endorsed by the Board of Visitors, and the dismissals followed. But Colonel Ottley is a military officer, and the Board of Visitors consists of men of more or less eminence in various branches of science and administration; not one of them all appears to be an academic expert. A correspondent of the *Times* says that "the more one looks into the question of the dismissals the more apparent does it become that the College is suffering from a bad system of management," and the opinion appears to sum up the case conclusively. Apart from the hard lot of the teachers that have been dismissed, there is to be considered the bearing of the new situation upon the interests of India. The other day (March 4), an influential meeting was held on the subject in one of the Committee rooms of the House of Commons, including not only members of the British parties but the representatives of all the Universities; and it was decided to request another interview with Lord George Hamilton, and if such interview were refused, to bring the question before House at the earliest possible opportunity. We hope that in the discussion of the matter the interest of India will be kept clearly and steadily in view.

In a letter to the *Times* (March 2), Mr. Morice Leslie, M.Inst.C.E., brings forward an aspect of the case that deserves especially to be kept in mind. Mr. Leslie asks:—

> What of the past students? What of these pioneers of the service who first went out from Coopers Hill? What have been their experiences? "We have created a new profession on a level with the two great Indian services. the civil and the military," says the Under-Secretary of State in 1871. "We ask £150 a year for three years, giving in return to those young men £420 in the very first year of their service," says the same authority (*Times*, March, 1871).

Have these promises been fulfilled? Mr. Leslie says No: "Neither in pay, promotion, or position have these officers received anything even remotely equivalent to what was promised them, while their pensions are liable to reduction by exchange." The highest first year's pay has been £385, not £420. He quotes from a letter of Sir George Chesney's to the India Office in 1892:—

> I think it must be admitted that faith has not been kept with them. I submit that every fair-minded man will recognise that there has been a clear breach of faith.

But the Secretary of State referred the complainants to the law courts! Again:—

> What did Mr. Henry Kimber last August force the Secretary of State to admit? That on the one occasion when these gentlemen had a chance of a hearing (in 1890, before Sir S. King's committee on a kindred service) the evidence in their favour received from the Government of India was "withheld"
>
> What did Sir S. King elicit last May? That the petitions of the Coopers Hill engineers, after ten years, were still the "subject of correspondence."

The Coopers Hill men, then, are "the Uitlanders of the Indian services." Well may Mr. Leslie ask: "Is it not in the interests of the public faith, as well as of Coopers Hill, that some independent enquiry should be granted?"

Although no long time has passed since the Calcutta Corporation was *reformed*, the supporters of that reformation become less and less satisfied with their work. The latest complainant is Mr. W. J. Bradshaw, Master of the Calcutta Trades Association, who at the annual meeting of that body said:—

> It is only during the past year that a very great change has been introduced into the constitution of the Municipality—a change which it was hoped would cause the Government of this great city to progress more satisfactorily than it had done in the past; but although the number of Councillors and the volume of eloquence has been largely reduced, I am not prepared to say we are any better off.

He went on to declare inconceivable "anything more pitiful as an exhibition of sheer ineptitude" than the conduct of the reformed corporation in connexion with the new drainage works. In fact, as we foretold, the net result of the "reform," in itself unjust to the ratepayers, has been to exclude some of the best Indians in the vain hope of including a few more Europeans. The habits, occupations and interests of the latter alike render them disinclined to undertake municipal duties in a country which is not their home, and where they are absorbed in other business. If the Calcutta Municipality needed improvement—and there is generally room for such in local bodies whether at home or abroad—that should have been sought by widening, not narrowing, the range of selection, and by inducing the best Indians to enter the corporation, not by artificially excluding them to admit a few more Europeans.

The *Tribune* fondly recalls the great deeds of the Chiefs of the Punjab Native States in the past. It reminds us of the decision of the then Mahárájá of Patiala to support the British in the days of the Mutiny and the vigour and devotion with which he redeemed his promises. And it asks how it is that this pristine fortitude has decayed. According to the Report relating to Native States issued by the Punjab Government, many of the Princes have fallen below the standard of earlier days. But the *Tribune* suggests that this may be owing to their "too palpable dependence on the representatives of the Paramount Power." This it appears is sometimes carried to insulting lengths. The Rájá of Bushahar is described by the *Tribune* as an aged chieftain, good-natured, inoffensive, but somewhat impulsive. He has just been fined 1,000 rupees for not meeting the Deputy Commissioner on the latter's visit to the State. Is this the way to make the Native Princes conceive a high standard of duty? Is it the way to make them worthy of their great position?

The Sambalpur Urijas have again submitted to the Viceroy a memorial "regarding the substitution of Hindi for Urija as the Court, Revenue and official language of Sambalpur and the attendant evils and inconveniences which the adoption has, as apprehended, not failed to bring about." Sambalpur is the only Urija district of the Central Provinces. It has a population of well over a million and a half. Since January 1, 1896, the court language has been Hindi—a language that very few suitors understand. Some educational attempt has been made to teach Hindi to the rising generation, but it does not seem to have been very effective. Meantime the memorialists complain of the strain put upon the mental faculties of the "already no less enervated Urija boy!" The idea of carrying on the public work of such a large district in a language not understanded of the people is sufficiently amazing, but there it is, and it is not likely that any prayers will move the authorities to depart from their artificial process of unification. Surely, in comparison with the hardship inflicted on the people, it would have been an exceedingly small matter that a few officials should have made themselves acquainted with the Urija language. The memorialists urge that, if administrative difficulties still stand in their way, "Sambalpur with its Garjat Mahals may be made over to Bengal as a part of the Orissa (Orija) Division, with which this portion of the Province is geographically, historically and socially connected"—and, of course, linguistically. We daresay, however, that the Government will persist in its course, undeterred by the very real hardship to a million or two of people during at least a generation, and not improbably several generations.

Remittances on India for 80 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs.4,87,45,000 were received at prices ranging from 1s. $3\frac{7}{8}$d. to 1s. 4d. The following amounts were allotted—viz., in bills, Rs.30,76,000 on Calcutta at an average of 1s. 3·908d., Rs.20,10,000 on Bombay and Rs.13,54,000 on Madras at an average of 1s. 3·906d.; and in telegraphic transfers, Rs.5,28,000 on Calcutta and Rs. 9,32,000 on Madras at an average of 1s. 3·968d., and Rs.,1,00,000 on Bombay at 1s. 4d. Tenders for bills at 1s. $3\frac{29}{32}$d. and for transfers at 1s. $3\frac{31}{32}$d., will receive about 31 per cent. Later the Council sold bills for Rs.10 000 on Calcutta at 1s. $3\frac{15}{16}$d., and Rs.2,25,440 at 1s. $3\frac{31}{32}$d., Rs.10,000 on Bombay and Rs.40,000 on Madras at 1s. $3\frac{15}{16}$d., and transfers for Rs. 4,40,000 on Calcutta at 1s. 4d. Last week remittances for Rs.80,45,700 were sold for £534,020, making the total sold from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs. 17,27,71,665, producing £11,505,010. Next week 80 lakhs will again be offered.

SOME CORNERS OF SOUTH INDIAN LIFE.[1]

THE Uriyas of Ganjam are a people doomed to obscurity. Included in the Province of Madras, they are separated from the main body of their kinsmen in Orissa. Distant from the seat of Government, overshadowed by the mass of Telugus, and with no resources of wealth or character, they can expect little attention from the authorities, while the world at large is content to ignore their trivial existence. Yet even the most obscure parts of British India must have administrators and magistrates, and so it came to pass that Mr. Stanley P. Rice, of the Indian Civil Service, found himself in Ganjam; and as a result some light has been let into these dark places. Diderot said that if every fact were recorded, we should want another planet as a record-office; and when we see a whole volume devoted to this insignificant people, we wonder where the future will put its books if every part of mankind is to be treated on the same scale. But let us not grudge the Uriyas their good fortune. The Cinderellas of the nations thus borne into light may teach us many things which are apt to be forgotten if we keep our eyes fixed on those who have lived in fame and marched along the great highways of the world.

For the work he has undertaken Mr. Rice is excellently fitted. He has a clear and simple style which is well adapted to his subject. He has a cultured mind and a lively curiosity. Above all he has a deep sympathy with all mankind. And it is this that makes him see what has been hidden from other observers—the good qualities that the Uriya keeps under the outer covering of slothfulness and dirt. It is true that rudeness and stupidity are commonly attributed to him, but Mr. Rice has to record something very different:—

> The Uriya as I have found him is particularly polite in small ways. I have expressed this opinion to several and have always heard that the Uriya is a rude and stupid brute. Now there is an "open sesame!" to a man's polite feelings which can hardly be too highly estimated, and that is his language. The Uriya is highly delighted if he finds a European who can talk to him in his own language—perhaps it is partly because such Europeans are rare. He is—by hypothesis I was going to say—backward in the race of civilisation; consequently he is timid. Therefore, if a man ride up and ask his way in Telugu of a man who does not know Telugu, he will probably get no answer! He will then ask, perhaps with a little bluster, and the terrified Uriya will run away.

And then after recalling how much their own speech is even to the most civilised, he goes on to contrast with the foregoing his own experiences among these people.

> If you talk, then, to the Uriya in Uriya you will generally find him polite. I have asked for the village officers, for some water for my horse, or the way to the next village, and plenty of willing men come to help me, while probably one or two will accompany me some distance. These are small things, but they are done cheerfully and politely; and I have known Uriyas put themselves to gratuitous inconvenience to do me some small service unasked.

Such is the power of sympathy with the people and a knowledge of their language.

Nor is it only to bring out the good qualities of the people that sympathy is of value. Without it, how impossible is it to understand the motives and actions of the people. The Collector may speak of the reluctance of the people to seek the relief works as "foolish infatuation," but Mr. Rice considers the expression incorrect. Among the Uriyas, the women do not work outside the home, field-labour is held to be higher than stone-breaking, and the people are rather lazy, all sufficient reasons for their keeping away as long as they can. But there are other reasons intimately bound up with their traditional customs. Especially does public opinion condemn those who accept food cooked in public kitchens:—

> To be called "chotrokhya," or "eater in kitchens," is to be branded for life with the mark of Cain. . . . . We all know the dread an old couple have to "go upon the parish." Yet the old go to the workhouse only to die; the young leave it without friends to pity or despise them. But the Uriya "chotrokhya" goes back to the village in which he was born and bred. The old shake their heads at him; his friends with whom in happier days, he, a naked urchin, made mud pies in the village street, now point at him the finger of scorn; the young shake off the dust of their feet against him. These things are admitted facts; they are customs, not of caste, but of race.

Of the deeper questions of Indian politics, of the economic situation and its difficulties and dangers, Mr. Rice hardly speaks. They are matters that only concern the Uriyas inasmuch as they are Indians—matters which perhaps are less insistent in these backwaters of civilisation than in the great centres. He has certainly a warm feeling for the great Service to which he belongs, and a strong admiration for the peace that is now universal throughout India; but he is far too deeply versed in all sides of the Indian's life to think that the changes of the last century were for good in every particular. After blaming the zemindars because they grudge the outlay necessary to the development of their estates, he goes on to speak of the wild type of people found in some of the zemindaries, a type growing wilder as one approaches the hills; and he adds these significant words:—

> They are a simple folk, content with what they possess, and regard their zemindar as being almost divine—as one whom it would be unbecoming in them to approach without the deepest reverence and humility. The traveller cannot fail to notice the difference between these people and the rayats of Government villages—too often to the disadvantage of the latter—not in prosperity, perhaps, but in character.

On one point Mr. Rice takes a view somewhat different from that usually put forward. Whatever may be the case in the more settled parts of India, he does not agree that the officials among the Uriyas in the early part of the century were so much superior in knowledge of the people to those of the present day:—

> We are accustomed to think of the Collectors in those days as the kings or the fathers of the people, making royal progress to receive the homage of their subjects, and listening with ready ear to the complaints of their children. The authorities in Ganjam know nothing about the people, the country, or the language. There were no maps, there were hardly any roads. The people were either disaffected, or treacherous, or afraid. Those who should have seen that the hill tribes were a peculiar people were treating them as the ordinary peasants of the plains. Those whose business it was to know the language of the district did not know a word of Uriya.

But we suspect that Mr. Rice's standard is rather high. Certainly few officials know as much as he does concerning the people among whom their lot is cast; not only has he studied the people, their habits and ways of life, but even their traditions and the tales they tell. Of these he has given some interesting examples in the last chapter of his book.

The Uriyas, who form the main body of the population of Ganjam, are not the only remnant separated from their fellows that exist in the district. There are also Khonds—not the Khonds of the mountains, but others who, living amid the Uriyas, have adopted to a great extent their language and manners. But even poorer, wilder, and more primitive than the Khonds are the Savaras. They live in the mountains in little villages of some ten houses built on the side of a hill, upon a small plateau levelled for the purpose.

> The Savara's world is around him; he knows nothing of courts of justice or forest laws; he has never heard of railways or canals. His dominion is the mountain—the mountain is his all.

On the sea-coast live a caste of fishermen. These, too, are charmingly described by Mr. Rice. Lower down the coast they are Christians, the descendants of the converts of St. Francis Xavier, still bearing the names by which they were baptised,

> so that, incongruous as it sounds, José Fernandez and Maria Santiago are but humble folk, catching fish in a primitive way, with no more clothing on than a small loin cloth and a picture of the Virgin.

But here the fisher folk are Hindus, and "caste has the effect, which, however lowly it be, it always has, of uniting the community in the bonds of brotherhood." With this final example of Mr. Rice's sympathetic insight, we take leave of his book.

[1] "Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life." By Stanley P. Rice, Indian Civil Service. (London, New York, and Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co. 1901.)

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

IN one of his inimitable biographies Dr. Johnson describes Pope and Phillips as living in "a perpetual reciprocation of malevolence." Lord Raglan, when he went to Pall Mall, must have expected to find Lord Roberts and Mr. Brodrick subsisting on some such amiable basis. "My room lies between their two rooms," he informed the House of Lords the other night, "and I can assure your lordships that so far from being on unfriendly terms they are constantly visiting one another. I could sometimes wish indeed that their communication was not quite so frequent." The ingenuous Under-Secretary must have imagined that the position of his room implied some

official apprehension of a duel between his chiefs. Nothing could be more captivating than the naïve manner in which he confided to his fellow peers the surprise and gratification excited in his breast by the discovery that so far from being a buffer interposed between two inimical forces, his enviable function at the War Office was to be a medium of friendly intercourse.

Much to the astonishment of all who knew the facts, Lord Wolseley painted a picture scarcely less idyllic of his official relations with Lord Roberts's predecessor. "No disagreeable incident of any sort that I can recall," he said, "ever marred the pleasant relations which marked our intercourse." Nevertheless, there was a strain of profound bitterness in all the allusions of the ex-Commander-in-Chief to the ex-Minister for War. The ostensible object of his attack was the system, but it was only too clear that in the critic's mind the system was embodied in the personality of Lord Lansdowne. The weakness of Lord Wolseley's long and carefully-prepared indictment was its vagueness. "Many an evening, at the end of my day's work," he observed, "I had felt sick at heart when I contemplated the great national risks deliberately accepted by the Government that happened to be in office." Here was an accusation which in its beginning threatened to be a specific impeachment, but which closed like the speech itself, in the anti-climax of a generality. The deliverance indeed might be summarised in a sentence. Lord Wolseley holds that the Chinese method of subordinating the military control of an army to civilian supervision is fatal to efficiency, and as one means of counteracting the evil influence of the arrangement he would have the Commander-in-Chief encouraged to cultivate the gifts of oratory so that in case of necessity he might appeal from the interference of the Minister for War to the Cæsar of public opinion.

If Lord Wolseley's allegations were indefinite, the counter-charges of Lord Lansdowne were too personal. The ex-Minister for War startled the House by producing a confidential memorandum, and, contrary to all usage, proceeded to make a direct attack on the ex-Commander-in-Chief, on the strength of certain miscalculations betrayed by the document. Lord Wolseley was accused of neglecting the opportunities of his post, of advising the Government that one army corps would suffice to subjugate the Transvaal, and of being the real author of the "unhappy entanglement of Ladysmith." Needless to say, the onslaught caused a profound sensation. Here and there some wise heads may have been shaken over this unprecedented washing of dirty linen in the eyes of scoffing Europe. No such misgivings, however, were expressed in the faces of Ministers. Lord Salisbury beamed with satisfaction, and there was a look of gratified malice in the countenance of Mr. Chamberlain, who, with other members of the Government, had taken up a place in front of the Throne, in evident expectation of this carefully-prepared *dénouement*.

For all that came of it, the debate might very well have ended here. The speeches on the second day were interesting but futile. Lord Lansdowne's action evoked a chorus of condemnation. That veteran Constitutionalist, Lord Northbrook, poured the vials of his wrath on what he described as a perilous innovation, while Lord Chelmsford stormed at the hapless Foreign Secretary with verbal shot and shell. Lord Dunraven, Lord Spencer, and Lord Rosebery joined their voices to the protest. The Duke of Devonshire alone essayed to defend the course taken by his colleague, for when Lord Salisbury's turn came the Prime Minister discreetly ignored the point. In the end the peers languidly allowed the controversy to expire. Lord Wolseley threatens to revive its embers, but in the meantime "the system" is scarcely so much as scorched.

Under Mr. Balfour's dilettante leadership the House of Commons is rapidly degenerating into a bear-garden. On Tuesday last the First Lord of the Treasury spent th evening in contemplation of the oratorical fireworks of the House of Lords. Subsequently he looked into the other Chamber, and finding nothing more important going on there than a debate on the educational system of the country, he at once retired in favour of Sir John Gorst. When next Mr. Balfour made his presence known it was to move the closure on a discussion that had lasted six hours on a vote for money amounting to seventeen millions sterling. A section of the Nationalist members resented this high-handed action, and as their resentment only evoked a storm of sneers and taunts they foolishly allowed themselves to be drawn into a defiance of the Chair. Then followed one of the most deplorable scenes ever witnessed within the walls of Parliament.

One would willingly dismiss the episode in the jejune phrases of the official record. "Mr. Speaker then directed the said members to withdraw," so runs the document, "but they refused to obey his order. Whereupon Mr. Speaker directed the Serjeant-at-Arms to cause the said members to be removed from the House, and they were removed accordingly." Removed accordingly! The removal thus jauntily described was effected by a detachment of police, who did their work amid scenes of disorder and violence suggestive of an orgie of street Hooliganism. Twelve members were literally carried out, and so completely brutalised by the spectacle were some of those who witnessed it that they actually applauded the constables and raised shouts of exultation over the physical discomfiture of their fellow-members. The Speaker was terribly distressed, and so were Mr. Balfour and Mr. Wyndham. A little tact, exercised even at the eleventh hour, might have saved the situation. Unhappily, Mr. Balfour is as obstinate as he is weak. Rather than raise a bridge for the retreat of his adversaries, he preferred to inflict a crowning humiliation on the British Parliament.

To-day the House of Commons is to sit in judgment on the authors of this disgraceful episode. Two, or, perhaps, three of the members implicated are said to have been expelled under a misapprehension. Their names were reported to the Speaker in such haste that no time remained for explanation, with the result that ground exists for the suspicion that a gross injustice may have been inflicted on Captain Donelan, Mr. Jordan, and Mr. McGovern. The debate will probably be prolonged into the small hours of the morning, for a stubborn resistance is certain to be offered to the drastic resolution which Mr. Balfour is bringing forward — a resolution the effect of which might be to punish a constituency by disfranchisement for a whole Session for the fault of a single obstreperous member. If Mr. Balfour were to promote himself to the House of Lords the very root of the difficulty would be removed.

Members, without distinction of party, condemn the Irish extremists for their unseemly behaviour, but beneath the indignation excited by yesterday morning's explosion there runs a strong undercurrent of hostility to Mr. Balfour's slip-shod manner of conducting the business of Parliament. The leader of the House was warned by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman on the first day of the Session of the probable consequences of his mismanagement. For the present, the vials of public wrath are descending exclusively on the heads of the Nationalist offenders. Two or three days hence, however, the critics will doubtless turn their attention to the prime culprit, and then we shall see what we shall see. One thing is evident, and that is that we are only at the beginning of the trouble. The omens for the remainder of the Session are as black as night.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

THE FAMINE COMMISSION CLOSED.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, February 16.

Two public enquiries are now at an end. The enquiry into the allegations made by the Hon. Mr. Gokuldas Kandas Parekh in the matter of the collection of revenue in certain parts of Surat and Broach districts came to a close a fortnight ago. It has been generally felt that our respected townsman and legislator has bravely borne the burden and heat of the struggle, and it is the more creditable as it has been done single-handedly. Such disinterested public service needs public recognition, irrespective of the report which Mr. Maconochie may make; and it is to be hoped that sooner or later the public of Bombay will place on record their sense of gratitude for that service rendered against heavy odds and amid many insidious obstructions. As to the report itself it is not easy to forecast the date of its publication. There may possibly be many a migration backwards and forwards between the enquiring authority and the Bombay Secretariat before we know what "Bombay Castle," with the Hon. Mr. Monteath at its side, has to say on the affair. Meanwhile we suspend judgment.

As to Sir Antony MacDonnell's Famine Commission it closed its proceedings a week ago. There will be much

searching of heart, undoubtedly. But the public must have noticed the nature of Sir Antony's cross-examination of Bombay officials and the trend of the opinion the latter have given. It is not all smooth and plain sailing for the Government of Bombay, and there is ample internal evidence with regard to some of the officials in the highest grade that the Commission has created no little flutter in the dovecot of the chief revenue authority of the Presidency. An unusual effort appears to have been made to minimise the sins of omission and commission of those responsible at head quarters for the illiberal policy of famine wage and famine task which the searching enquiry of Mr. Vaughan Nash and others so successfully brought to light. That policy, it may be taken for granted, will be severely condemned by the Commission, if we may judge from the evidence recorded. No witness has been able to speak with an unhesitating voice in the matter. The tongue in many instances seems to have faltered, and throughout there was a general undercurrent of feeling that the Bombay Government must be saved from the scalpel of the terrible President, who went at his work with a refreshing vigour and open-mindedness that remind one of the officials of an older generation. There is in Sir Antony's method all the close searching spirit of a Sir Charles Jackson, of the Bank of Bombay Commission fame; but not his judicial patience. Still, Sir Antony has done his work with a promptitude and ability which will be remembered by at least one generation of Bombay Secretariat folk. Here for the time we may leave this Commission, only to await with keen curiosity the report which, no doubt, will not be long delayed. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces is not a man who allows the grass to grow under his feet. Nor is he one to brook opposition. Of one thing there is fair certainty—that the Bombay Revenue system will have to be radically reformed. This is what the *Times of India* anticipates. But it seems that the demi-gods of the Bombay Government are anxious to forestall Sir Antony's report by taking at once in hand the tinkering of the mischievous Land Revenue Code of 1879.

INDIA AND THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION.

THE PREVENTION OF FAMINE.

The recent famines in India have deeply stirred the feelings of all classes of Englishmen, and the Conference of the General Committee of the National Liberal Federation, which took place at Rugby on February 27 last, recognised the gravity of the situation in India by passing a suitable resolution on this subject. The importance of this resolution cannot be exaggerated; it shews that while affairs in South Africa are at the present moment distracting the minds of English Liberals, they are at the same time not less anxious about the condition of their fellow subjects in India.

The meeting of the Delegates at Rugby was the largest of such meetings since the establishment of the Federation, and the large hall was inconveniently crowded. The South African discussions were necessarily prolonged, and it was after five o'clock when Mr. Romesh Dutt, who attended as a delegate from Lewisham, was able to move his resolution, which was printed in INDIA of February 1. It ran thus:—

"That this meeting deplores the succession of severe famines which have caused the deaths of millions of people in India in recent years, and considers it necessary to prevent the recurrence of such severe calamities by moderating the Land Tax, extending irrigation works, and relieving as far as possible the annual burdensome drain on the financial resources of India which impoverishes the people of that country."

In moving this resolution, Mr. DUTT said that although the subjects which had been discussed by the meeting that afternoon were of the gravest importance, there was none among them which was of a higher importance in the interests of the British Empire than that which formed the subject of his resolution. They had to deplore the deaths of twenty or thirty thousand Englishmen in the South African War; but the loss of lives from the present famine in India could scarcely be much under a million; while the loss of lives from the succession of famines which had occurred in India within the present generation, or rather within the forty-two years since India had passed under the direct administration of the Crown, could scarcely be less than fifteen millions. English Liberals would ask themselves the cause of these disastrous and frequent famines in a time of profound and uninterrupted peace within the natural frontiers of India. India at present was not a great manufacturing country, nor a great commercial country, but a great agricultural country; and four-fifths of the vast population of India depended upon agriculture. If the Government demand from the produce of the soil was moderate, and placed within definite and intelligible limits, the people could be prosperous. But the Government demand was being increased at each recurring settlement every twenty or thirty years; the people could save nothing; and every year of drought was a year of famine. After the great famine of 1860, Lord Canning, then Viceroy of India, had recommended that limits should be placed on the Government demand, and Lord Lawrence, who succeeded as Viceroy of India a few years after, had supported this recommendation; but, nevertheless it was rejected by the India Office in London. The Marquis of Ripon who was Viceroy of India from 1880 to 1884 had recommended certain other limitations to the Government demand; but even his very moderate recommendation had been rejected by the India Office in London. Thus it happened that the agricultural people of India were in a state of chronic poverty and indebtedness, and would continue to be subject to repeated and fatal famines, till the Land Tax was moderated and strictly limited. His second recommendation was the extension of irrigation works. On this point there was no difference of opinion, because irrigation works—tanks as well as canals—were the only possible means of saving crops in years of drought. His last recommendation was to decrease as far as possible the annual drain from India. While taxation had increased both in England and in India, there was an essential difference between the two countries. In England, the proceeds of taxation were spent in the country, and thus flowed back to the people in one shape or another to fructify their industries and help their trade. In India, an amount equal to about one half of the net revenues was annually taken away from the country, and thus rendered the people hopelessly poor. It was a drain unexampled in any country on earth at the present day; and if England herself had to send out one half of her annual revenues to be spent annually in Germany or France or Russia, there would be famines in England before long. Therefore he proposed that this annual drain should be reduced, as far as possible, from year to year, by the employment of the people of India in the administration of their own country, and by the cost of the Imperial Army in India being shared to some extent by England herself.

Miss ALISON GARLAND rose to second the Resolution and was received with cheers. She said that she had probably been asked to second it because she had been to India in 1899-1900, and had visited several famine centres, and knew what the Indian famine meant. She depicted in vivid colours the scenes she had witnessed, and concluded her description by stating that in the midst of these horrors the Government had refused to make a Parliamentary grant to India—not because the British nation were averse to such a grant, not because such a grant was not needed, but because the Indian Government and the India Office did not ask for it. The Indian Government did not ask for it because they knew that a Parliamentary grant would be followed by an inconvenient Parliamentary enquiry.

When the Chairman was about to put the Resolution to the vote, one delegate rose to oppose it. He said he had been in India and had seen two famines, and he was opposed to the Resolution. The remedies suggested by the mover would not avert famines in India, for when the annual rains failed, and the crops of the two hundred million people of India failed, nothing could avert a famine. He proposed therefore that this meeting should not pass the Resolution in a hurry.

Colonel HANNA who was in the gallery then rose to speak; and though it was getting late, his venerable appearance, his great earnestness, and his known mastery of Indian facts ensured him a patient and respectful hearing. He said there was no such thing as the total failure of the crops in India. When crops failed in one Province there were always ample harvests in others. There always was a sufficient supply of food for the people of India. It was not the want of food supply, but it was the want of money to buy food, which caused famines in localities where the crops failed. He therefore thought that famines could be averted by improving the condition of the people. But the Government of India spent money unwisely in frontier wars, and the total outlay of such frontier wars came to eighty millions of English money. Colonel Hanna therefore supported the Resolution.

The Resolution being put to the vote was carried almost unanimously, only one or two hands being raised against it. This concluded the business of the meeting.

FAMINE IN INDIA.

DISCUSSION AT TOYNBEE HALL.

[FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.]

Sir William Wedderburn opened a Conference on Thursday evening, February 28, at Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel, on "Famine in India." Mr. R. R. S. Tanner presided.

The CHAIRMAN said that Sir William Wedderburn's name was familiar to most of them, and he needed no introduction. He would, therefore, call upon him at once to begin his address.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, who was cordially received, said: I desire to place before the Conference the following proposition: "That the mortality in Indian famines arises from the excessive poverty of the Indian masses, and that this poverty is caused by our Indian Government, through overtaxation and errors in administration." The meaning of the first part of this proposition is that the famine is not a famine of food, but of means; not a failure of the food supply, but of the means to buy the food. Even in the worst localities and in the worst months of this famine there has been no lack of food in the hands of the traders; but the peasantry have died of hunger because they were too poor to buy. They are frugal beyond belief, and can live upon 1½ penny a day, and they died because this amount was not forthcoming, either from their own savings or the charity of others. As regards the second part of the

proposition I will show that this destitution is the work of our Government, and for this the British people are responsible. We jealously keep all power in our own hands, but while we refuse to the wise and law-abiding people of India any voice in their own affairs, we will not ourselves give attention to those affairs. We give these unhappy people not a shred of independence as regards taxation and expenditure; we grasp all the power, and must accept all the responsibility. I say that that responsibility is an awful one, when the people of India die from famine and disease, not by hundreds and thousands, nor even by tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, and by millions. What are the causes of these terrible recurring famines? The official theory seems to be that Providence is alone to blame, and that Government is not responsible. Sir Henry Fowler, in the House of Commons, said that the "cause of famine was the failure of rain, and he did not see how Government could be fairly blamed for a bad monsoon." This is true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. For famine, that is death by starvation, is produced by two factors, drought and destitution, and the greater of these is destitution. For although drought produces local failure of harvest, it has never affected all India at the same time, and in the worst famines there has always been sufficient food in India, taken as a whole. Indeed during this famine there has been enough and to spare, for there have actually been exports of food grains from India. The railways have brought food to the stricken districts, and even in Gujarat, where the mortality was greatest, the official reports show that there were large stocks of grain in the hands of the traders. The real cause of the mortality was the destitution of the people. The peasantry died because although there was abundant food on the spot they could not find the 1½ penny a day necessary to keep them from starvation. Being hopelessly in debt to the money-lenders, they had neither coin nor credit wherewith to buy. I submit, therefore, that Providence should be found not guilty in this matter. It is not a question of weather, but of good administration, and for this the Government is responsible. The peasantry of India ought not to be in a state of destitution, and would not be if they had fair play. Rural India has all the elements of wealth: a rich soil, fine climate, labour abundant, cheap, and skilful. What she needs is capital, for irrigation and manure. But all her capital is drained away by the exactions of a foreign and absentee landlord. India should be a garden instead of a place of desolation. Some of the causes of her poverty are rack-renting, and excessive taxation, such as the salt tax, where the cultivator pays 20 pence to Government for leave to consume one pennyworth of salt. Also the ancient rural economy has been upset by revolutionary changes, such as the establishment of debt courts on the European model. The result is that the peasant cultivator has broken down, and become hopelessly indebted to the money-lender. The over-taxation should be reduced, and the Imperial Exchequer should pay its fair share of the large army which is kept in India for Imperial purposes. I think I have made out a case for enquiry into the economic condition of the Indian people, and the causes of their excessive poverty. My chief complaint against the Government is that they have refused this enquiry, which is the first step towards finding a remedy for these terrible and recurring calamities. (Loud applause.)

In the debate which followed the speakers heartily supported the lecturer in his demand for an enquiry into the condition of the people of India.

Sir W. Wedderburn, in answer to questions put to him, said there had already been two Famine Commissions, but these Commissions had only enquired into the machinery for the relief of the famine-stricken people, after the famine had broken out, instead of enquiring into the best means of avoiding such famines. The officials would not go fully into the cause of the famines until the electors of this country compelled them to do so. As to the matter of caste in India, a man followed the occupation his father followed before him, and in this way, having always given itself up to study, the priestly caste had become very intelligent and intellectual. These wise and just men are trusted by the Natives themselves, and the Government should take them into their counsels and learn by their experience. The Indian National Congress met every year for the purpose of declaring how best the condition of the people might be improved. Instead, however, of seeing that this Congress was doing its best for the good of the people, the Indian Government tended to regard it as a seditious movement. If the Natives were not in such miserable destitution, what splendid customers they would be for our goods. For, if each Indian could spend but one pound per year, India would purchase much more from us than all the rest of the world put together. (Applause.)

The following resolution was suggested by the Chairman, and applauded by the meeting, but in accordance with the rules of the Conferences was not put to the vote:—

"That it is the duty of the Government to make full and independent enquiry into the economic condition of the people of India in order to ascertain the causes of their excessive poverty, which makes them powerless to resist the attacks of famine and disease."

A selection of the publications obtainable from the British Committee of the Indian National Congress was distributed among the audience.

INDIAN VILLAGE COMMUNITIES AND THE FAMINE.

In the expectation of hearing an address on this subject by Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., a large audience assembled last Sunday evening at Raleigh Hall, Effra Road, Brixton Hill, the centre of the Streatham and Brixton Ethical Institute. Owing, however, to the lecturer's unavoidable absence through illness the address was delivered by an Indian gentleman, Mr. J. M. Parikh.

These village communities, said the lecturer, were originally self-contained societies of a patriarchal type, ruled by councils of Elders. One-sixth of the produce of the soil was devoted to Governmental purposes: but it was important to remember that the Government had no proprietary right in the land. The soil belonged to the heads of the families who tilled it. When England annexed these territories not only were these proprietary rights ignored but the former tax in kind of one-sixth of the produce of the land was replaced by a money tax or rent representing 30, 40, and even 50 per cent. of the crop. The two things most valued, proprietary right and payment of taxes in kind (in which case a failure of crops would necessarily mean a cessation of taxation), had been totally ignored and put aside. So heavy were the rents that even in the best years cultivators had little left to keep body and soul together. Unfair assessment was a grievance against which there was no remedy. At one time, indeed, the Civil Courts had jurisdiction in this matter, but having had the temerity to award an assessment dispute in favour of the cultivator and against the Government it was decided by the latter that it was not expedient that the general policy of the Government in relation to land revenue should be questioned or that the details of revenue assessments should be questioned by the Civil Courts. Surely a disgraceful state of things. If the Government had no confidence in their own Courts how could it be possible to create such a confidence in the minds of those they ruled? The official explanation that famines in India were inevitable and were due to lack of rain was but a half truth. True, when rain failed, crops did not grow; but the fact that in the famine of 1877 £13,000,000 and in 1896 £10,000,000 worth of food stuffs were exported was sufficient to prove that India was able to produce enough to feed her population. People starved and died not because there was no grain but because they had nothing to buy it. The famine was not one of food but of money. In olden times cultivators were able in good seasons to store their surplus food, but they had now to pay so much in Government dues that this was impossible, and when bad years came, a prey to money-lenders, without money and without credit, they perished of starvation. The costly administration by highly paid English officials, and especially the fact that they spent the money they acquired outside her borders, was the chief cause of famine in India. A constant yearly drain of £30,000,000 was enough to ruin any country, and England herself, were such a sum taken from her yearly with no return, and wholly spent abroad, could not, he ventured to say, support such a drain indefinitely. Why not go back to the old system of taxation of one-sixth of the net produce? Why not select a few typical villages and give this plan a trial, and thus allow the Native to put by a surplus in good years against future bad ones? Famines were not inevitable. Let the Government accede to the earnest desire of the Hindus themselves and make this experiment. But they would not, and India must continue to starve and die unless the electors here redressed the wrong. It needed a thorough enquiry to be made as to the economic condition of India, not merely official enquiries into the methods of relief. In a typhoid epidemic people did not content themselves with taking medicine and palliatives, but looked for the cause, and then took drastic steps to remove it. Nor did they in India want merely the best way of dealing with famine when it occurred. They wanted to find out and remove the economic cause. The people of England had a great responsibility resting on them in this matter. Did they realise that responsibility? Were their agents in India ever called upon to give a just account of the charge entrusted to them? England ought to treat India justly even from a selfish point of view. Were India in a position to do a trade of only £1 per head of her population with this country it would exceed England's present trade with the whole world combined. Lord Curzon had truly described India as the pivot of the Empire, and that if it were lost the sun of the British Empire would set. Few people realised what a help India had been to England. She had nourished her soldiers and sent them abroad to Egypt, to China, and South Africa to fight the Empire's battles, and had borne all the expense of their maintenance—a most unfair burden. Soldiers who fought for the Empire should be maintained by the Empire and not remain a crushing load on a famine-stricken people. If Englishmen only knew, they would for pity's sake remove these intolerable burdens, and call their agents to account. But they heard one side only; and how difficult it was to adequately represent the cause of the poor people of India 6,000 miles away and differing so fundamentally in manners, customs, and religion. In conclusion Mr. Parikh thanked the audience for their patient hearing, and regretted that illness had prevented the presence of Sir W. Wedderburn, who had done so much for India, and whose great sacrifices on her behalf had earned her deepest gratitude.

Imperial Parliament.

Monday, February 25.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS.

MR. CAINE'S AMENDMENT.

[We now give a full report of Mr. Caine's and Mr. Schwann's speeches of which a summary was given in our last issue.]

Mr. Caine said:—The Amendment that stands in my name refers to the Report of the Royal Commission appointed two or three Parliaments back. This is the first opportunity which has presented itself to the House of raising any discussion on the recommendations of the Commission. The Commission was appointed in consequence of an Amendment moved to the Address in reply to the Queen's Speech in 1895 by Mr. Naoroji. As a result of the debate, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Henry Fowler, agreed to the appointment of a Commission. The Commission was appointed by common consent of

both Front Benches, the members being Lord Welby, Mr. Courtney, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Curzon, Sir D. Stewart, Sir E. W. Hamilton, Sir R. H. Knox, Sir J. Peile, Sir A. Scoble, Mr. Ryder, Mr. Buchanan, Sir W. Wedderburn, Mr. Naoroji and myself. Later on, when Mr. Curzon was appointed Viceroy of India, Sir R. Mowbray joined the Commission. The enquiry lasted five years, and the Commission reported in April last year. The Report was a very complete one. There was a Minority as well as a Majority Report, but the minority agreed in the main with the majority. They simply carried the recommendations of the majority a step further. The Report is divided into three sections—first, the financial machinery of India; second, the progress of expenditure; and third, the apportionment that takes place in the expenditure between India and the United Kingdom. I only intend to deal with the third section of the Report. My Amendment asks that those recommendations of the Report on which unanimity has been secured should not only be carried out in the future, but be made retrospective. It goes a step further than that. It calls attention to the recommendation in the Report, made by the minority of the Commission it is true, but none the less deserving the attention of Parliament on that account, and suggests that, to save further enquiry and delay, a lump sum should be paid by the Government of the United Kingdom to India in settlement of the arrears of the items which the Government has arranged shall in future be transferred from the Indian to the British Exchequer. The definite recommendations made by the Commission unanimously were that the Imperial Government should make a grant in aid of the charge for the India Office of £50,000; half the military charges for Aden, £72,000; increased contribution to the charges for the Persian Mission, £5,000; and half the cost of transport of troops to and from India, £130,000, or a total of £257,000. How have the British and Indian Treasuries agreed to meet these recommendations? They give the full amount recommended, but raise it from other sources. They grant for the transport of troops, £130,000; the military charges for Aden, £100,000; the Zanzibar maritime cable, £10,000; China establishments, £12,500; and Persian Mission, £5,000. These items amount to £500 more than the sum recommended by the Majority Report of the Royal Commission and agreed to by the minority. I ask the House to note that all these items will from April 1 be charged to the British Exchequer instead of the Indian. If it is just that this should be done in the accounts of 1901-2, it is equally just for last year, and for every previous year, so long as any of these misappropriations have taken place. But these items are in themselves utterly inadequate to meet the justice of the case. Half the charge for Aden, £100,000, is agreed to by the British Treasury, but in my judgment the whole of these charges for Aden ought to fall on the British Exchequer. Aden is not an Indian port, Aden is the key to the great commercial routes to Australia and China, as well as to India itself. It is a position absolutely essential to the Imperial interests of Great Britain. It holds precisely the same position to the Suez Canal on the south as Malta holds on the north. Take the proportion of shipping and the trade involved which has called at Aden during a year. In recent years the trade between the United Kingdom and British India has averaged about £70,000,000; between the United Kingdom and other Asiatic countries, £45,000,000; between the United Kingdom and Australasia, £55,000,000; so that the proportion of the Eastern trade of this country, other than that with India, using this fortified coaling station is as £100,000,000 to £70,000,000. Therefore, if India is to bear only her proportion on the basis of trade relations, the recommendation of the Royal Commission and the arrangement between the British and the Indian Treasury would have been £145 000, rather than £100,000. I should be justified in claiming the whole, but if India is compelled to bear any of the charges for Aden, surely the colonies ought to bear their fair share also. Aden exists quite as much for the defence of East Africa, the Mauritius, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, and the Australasian Colonies, as for that of India. Each of the places should bear its share, and if they do not India should not. Take the item of £10,000 for the Zanzibar and Mauritius cable. A cable was made eighteen years ago between Zanzibar and Mauritius communicating with the mainland. A subsidy was granted from the Imperial revenues for this cable, and the British Treasury charged £10,000 of this to India. In 1894, when I raised this question, I was told that the reason this £10,000 was charged to India was the important strategic position of Mauritius with regard to the defence of the Indian Empire. If any hon. member will take the trouble to look at the map he will see that Mauritius is about 2,000 miles from Aden, and about the same from India, and there being no cable from the Mauritius to India, it is ridiculous to talk of it as a position of any importance whatever with regard to the defence of India. This is £10,000 of sheer plunder from the Indian Exchequer by the British Treasury. Why has it been dropped? Because it is unjust. If it is dropped to-day it ought to have been dropped eighteen years ago. I have no hesitation whatever in claiming on behalf of the Indian Government and the Indian people that this unjust charge for the eighteen years should be refunded. Let us note what is stated in the communication from the Treasury to the India Office of September 11, 1900, published in a recent paper giving the details of the apportionment which has been made. This sentence occurs with reference to this charge: "For their part," say the British Treasury, "they readily agree to give up the Indian contribution of £10,000 a year towards the subsidy of the Zanzibar-Mauritius cable." Why has not the Secretary of State long since availed himself of this readiness on the part of the Treasury? I have never before known the Treasury to show any readiness to part with £10,000 a year. The justice of the case really needs no other evidence than this sentence from the Treasury itself. Then there are the matters of the Persian Mission and the establishments in China. The House would hardly believe that of the charges connected with our Embassy in Persia and our consular establishments in China India is compelled to pay a very large portion. The Consulates in China are a great deal more important to our wealthy colony of Hong Kong than they are to India, especially with regard to the trade of Hong Kong, which is drawn almost entirely from the ports at which these various consulates are established. There is a large trade carried on by our Australasian colonies with China, but not one penny of these charges is cast on our wealthy colonies. India has had to bear her share for many years, but now relief is given to the extent of £12,500. With regard to the Persian Mission, for the last fifty years we have been taking £7,500 a year out of the pockets of the Indian taxpayer to pay for our British Ambassador at the Court of Persia. At last we have been able to get from the British Treasury a concession of £5,000 of this amount, but still some £2,000 is kept standing. The total payments by India to the British Treasury in regard to diplomatic and consular charges in countries outside India amount to £43,000. These are Imperial duties, and every penny of the charges ought to be charged on Imperial funds and not to India. Why is this £2,000 retained in regard to the Persian Mission? If it is unfair to charge the £5,000, it is unfair to charge the whole £7,000, and it is ridiculous that the British Exchequer should expect India to pay towards the salary and expenses of our Persian Ambassador. This amount with regard to the establishments in China is one of the items the Secretary of State has thrown in; it is not asked for by the Majority Report, nor indeed is it asked for by the Minority Report, except indirectly in connexion with Imperial charges and Consular and Embassy services. The Minority Report was signed by three members of the Commission—Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Naoroji, and myself—who had some claim to represent the Indian people; we simply accepted the recommendations of the Majority Report and did not go into details. That this amount has not been asked by the Majority shows, I think, the extreme moderation of their demands, because here it is thrown into their laps by a generous Treasury. The arrears under both these heads should be refunded. Surely the terms to which the Treasury "readily agree," and others which are given without any recommendation from the Commission should in common justice include the restitution of arrears. I have endeavoured to show that the £257,000 transferred under all these items fails to meet the full justice of their own particular claim by at least £47,000 on the recommendations of the Royal Commission. This would raise the amount which ought to be paid from £257,000 to £304,000. Then the Treasury and the India Office entirely ignore the unanimous recommendations of the Commission that a grant should be made by the Imperial Government in aid of the charges for the India Office amounting to £50,000 a year. No doubt the Secretary of State will urge that the total grant proposed equals the total grant recommended. But that is a futile argument, because, first of all, the total amount recommended is made up of specific items, of which this £50,000 is one, and then the arrangement made by the Treasury and the India Office is also composed of specific items, of which this £50,000 is not one. Does the Secretary of State say that any one of these items is unjust? I am sure he will say nothing of the kind. That leaves us clear to consider the justice of the claim for the £50,000, which is not included in this arrangement, but was unanimously recommended by the Commission. Let me, as a simple way of putting the case before the House, read a brief summary from the Report of the Commission (p. 90) showing how they deal with and why they recommend this grant of £50,000: "The charge for the India Office is at present borne entirely by India. It may, however, be urged that, in a special sense, both the United Kingdom and India are interested in that organisation which exists in the capital of the Empire, and there brings together in a kind of co-ordination the Government of India and the United Kingdom; and we have considered the question whether the charge of this organisation is not a proper subject of apportionment. Light is thrown on this subject by a study of the treatment of similar questions in relation to colonies, whether Crown or self-governing. Historical circumstances explain the origin of the difference, but in relation to the colonies the ultimate solution arrived at is: the United Kingdom pays the whole cost of the committee of its own Government which represents it in relation to the colonies; the colony pays the whole cost of agencies established here in this country for the transaction of its business. Upon this principle the cost of the India Office would be thus apportioned; its Parliamentary representatives, with an adequate staff, would be paid by the United Kingdom, and the rest of the establishment would be paid by India. There is, however, a difference between the two cases. The East India Company paid the whole charge of its establishment in England, including that of the Board of Control. The Crown, in taking over the government of India, took it over on existing conditions, and the present arrangement is sanctioned by tradition and long practice. Tradition and long practice have established another arrangement in the colonies. A contribution has never been asked from them, and the great self-governing colonies throw so little work on the Colonial Office that their share of the charge of that office would be infinitesimal. Although, therefore, in theory they might fairly be asked to contribute, it would not be worth while to raise the question with them for so small a result. The cases, therefore, are not, on examination, as parallel as they appear at first sight. It is, however, a fact that the colonies do not contribute to the charge of the Colonial Office, and in order that there may be no ground for allegation that India is treated less favourably than other parts of her Majesty's Empire, we recommend that Parliament should be asked to make a contribution towards the charge of the India Office. This contribution may be made the subject either of a charge on the Consolidated Fund, or of an annual vote in aid of the home charges of the establishment of the Secretary of State. A choice between the two methods of procedure involves a question of policy. These home charges amounted in the years 1897-8 to £240,000. The larger part, however, of this sum represented costs of ordinary Indian administration. The vote from the Colonial Office, including non-effective allowances, amounts to about £50,000 a year, and a like amount would be, we think, a fair contribution towards the cost of the India Office." For the reasons I have read the Commission unanimously recommended this grant of £50,000. The Searetary of State for India is only an honorary member of the Cabinet of this country. He is none the less efficient on that account, but is it fair that the great and valuable

services of the Secretary of State for India should be available for the United Kingdom and the rest of the Empire as a member of his Majesty's Cabinet, with all the responsibility which Cabinet rank involves, without one penny being paid towards his salary by the taxpayers of this country? It is most unfair, and I think that at any rate the salaries of the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary should be paid by this country and not by India. The whole cost of the Secretary of State's establishment ought to be paid by the British Exchequer. Why has this amount been ignored? I hope the right hon. gentleman in his reply will inform us. It cannot be from pecuniary or economical reasons, because the declared object for the other items is that they will simplify the accounts between the two countries. The real object of the recommendation is ignored, because if it were adopted it would give this House a due and proper opportunity of raising a debate on Indian questions on the vote for the Secretary of State's salary. He is the only Minister of the Crown who has this exclusive privilege. Upon the salary of any other Minister, whether it be great or small, reductions may be moved, and this, that, or the other question raised affecting the administration of the department to which the Minister belongs. But it cannot be done with regard to India, and the result is, although any question affecting any one of our colonies, either Crown or self-governing, or the Isle of Man or Jersey, can be raised upon the salary of the Colonial Secretary or the Home Secretary, that any question, no matter how great its urgency, affecting India cannot be raised in this House at all except on an Amendment to the Address, a motion for the adjournment of the House—a course to which nobody likes to resort if it can be avoided—or upon the Indian Budget. If any portion of these charges were placed on the Estimates it would give the House just that opportunity which is most needed by members taking an interest in Indian questions of raising matters at a time when they could be properly discussed by the House. There are many other recommendations to which I should like to refer, but I do not wish to take up the time of the House more than is necessary, as there are many other Amendments to follow, and I wish to make way for them. I feel I have sufficiently made out the case for my Amendment and the recommendations with which I have already dealt, but I cannot refrain from dwelling upon one particular point recommended in the Minority Report which has been powerfully accentuated since the Report was completed. I will read Clause 99 on page 187 of the Report: "We are strongly of opinion that India ought no longer to bear the heavy financial strain of 75,000 British troops. At the present time about 10,000 of these troops have been withdrawn from India for employment in the Transvaal War, while 5,000 Native troops have also been withdrawn to replace British troops transferred from Ceylon, Mauritius, and Singapore for service in South Africa. If in a time of war, when the strain is great on the Empire, it is considered safe to withdraw 15,000 troops from India it is clear that on a peace footing the number of British troops may be safely reduced by 20,000. We do not recommend their withdrawal from India, where they should continue to be quartered, but equity requires that the revenues of India should be relieved of their entire charges, and that they should be treated as part of the reserve forces of the Eastern portion of the British Empire generally and borne in future upon the Army Estimates in that capacity." A few days ago I put a question to the Secretary of State asking what troops belonging to the Indian Army were at present stationed in countries outside the frontier of India, and the right hon. gentleman told the House that there are now 5,200 British troops belonging to the Indian Army in South Africa, 300 British and 16,300 Native troops in China and Hong Kong, 1,500 Native troops in the Mauritius, 880 at Singapore, 2,100 British and 800 Native in Ceylon, and 600 Natives in Jubaland—a total of 7,600 British and 20,000 Native troops. I think I am right in understanding that these are men only, officers not included.

Lord G. Hamilton was understood to intimate that officers were not included.

Mr. Caine: In my question I asked only for men, I did not put officers in. But it does not matter, the figures are near enough for my purpose. If there is one thing more than another necessary in the interests of India, and especially for the prevention of these recurring famines which wring our hearts whenever we read our papers, it is that money should be available for irrigation and other purposes which tend to prevent famine. The reason these enterprises are paralysed in India is the enormous amount of the military charges which India is called upon to bear. It is no concern of mine to-day to go into the question as to whether the Army is too great or too small in India, but here is the actual fact, that the Imperial Government think it perfectly safe at this moment to denude India of 30,000 British and Native troops. Are these 30,000 wanted permanently in India or are they not? That is the question. If you can take them away at a time like this you can do without them altogether. We are going to have debates on Army organisation. I would recommend the Secretary of State for War to realise that he might easily, with perfect safety, add 30,000 to the British Army by transfer from India. I want the House to remember the history of the administration in India during the last five years. I do not want to go into the question of whether that administration has been right or wrong, but there is no doubt whatever, according to the Government, that India has been seething with sedition. Personally, I deny it altogether. But the Government have suspended the Habeas Corpus Act or its equivalent in India. If that had been done in Ireland I do not know what hon. members below the gangway would have done, but there would have been ructions at any rate. Men have been prosecuted for sedition, and a stringent Press Act has been passed. On the top of this so-called sedition there have been plague, pestilence, and famine, and the condition of things in India has been such, according to the policy of the Government, as to make it most unsafe to take these troops out of the country. I think the fact that they have been taken out of the country settles once for all the controversy as to whether India has been seething with discontent. It is perfectly clear that nothing of the sort was the case. But if it was safe to denude the country of all these troops at a time when India has been more strained than at any time since the Mutiny it is safe to keep them out altogether. But I do not propose that they should be kept out altogether. Leave them there, but inasmuch as they are continually being used by the Government whenever there is any trouble in the East they ought, though kept in India, to be charged against British revenues and looked upon as a reserve force for the defence of the whole Empire. My Amendment suggests that all these arrears and the ignored recommendations should be lumped together and sunk once for all in a liberal grant in relief of the Indian famine. It is very difficult always to go back on these various difficult and intricate questions of apportionment, and I believe the Indian people will be quite willing to accept such a settlement. They know the extent of their grievances just as well as we do in this country, but I think in the face of a large grant they would accept the clean slate, and let the dead past bury its dead. The Treasury and the India Office agree to £257,000. As I have already said, if it is right now that this sum should be paid by the British Exchequer instead of by the Indian Treasury it has been right ever since the apportionment was made. Taking it at the low figure of twenty years, it comes to a sum of £5,000,000, which, to put it plainly, has been cheated out of the Indian Government and the Indian people by the British Treasury, while, if interest at the rate of 3 per cent. is added, the amount is about £7,000,000. I am not alone in making this recommendation. One of the greatest authorities on Indian questions, the Earl of Northbrook, an ex-Viceroy of India, said it would be only just if twelve years at any rate were refunded to the Indian people. No grant can equitably extinguish the enormous sums of which India in the past has been defrauded by the British Exchequer. The claim of India as laid before the Commission by the Indian Government was twofold. They first asked for a specific reduction on various services, and, secondly, they appealed for liberal treatment in the apportionment of common charges. An attempt has been made by the Treasury to meet the first; but the second can only be met by a generous and liberal grant from the one Government to the other. I plead for this on the ground of equity, and I leave it to my hon. friend who will second the Amendment to plead for it on the ground of generous sentiment to a great dependency which has borne sore trouble and affliction with bravery and to the admiration of the whole world. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Mr. Schwann said: It has always been said that if ever India is lost to this country it will be through the action of this House. My opinion is absolutely contrary to that dictum. If that event should ever occur, it will be through the inaction of this House. I think there is proof of this fact. Two cases are before us, one of which has been given in detail by the hon. Member for Camborne. He has explained that owing to the action of the Royal Commission £257,000 is now to be deducted from the payments of India to England. Who are the gentlemen who appealed for and demanded this Commission? They were nearly all Members or ex-Members of this House. The hon. Member for Camborne himself, Mr. Naoroji, Sir William Wedderburn, and one or two others brought this appeal before the Secretary of State. The Commission was granted, and we now see the large revision which is going to be made in the payments made by India. I think that is one clear proof that the intervention of this House in the affairs of India is not always a bad thing, but, on the contrary, it is very often very beneficial. I might mention in this respect some of the frontier wars, and more especially the case of Chitral. That question was debated at great length in this House, and the result has been that Lord Curzon, the present Viceroy, has come round very largely to the opinion expressed in this House, and he now seems to have adopted very largely the principles of Lord Lawrence.

Lord G. Hamilton: He has adopted the proposals made by myself in this House.

Mr. Schwann: I know that the proposals made by the noble lord were endorsed by this House, and that shows that this House takes part in Indian affairs with great advantage to India. Having proved to some extent that the action of this House is beneficial and desirable, I think we shall all feel that when India has been subject to so many misfortunes, not only last year, but misfortunes which commenced in the year 1897; when famines have struck at the root of prosperity and added large burdens to India; when famines have been followed by plague, and the resources of the country had been crippled to a very great extent, then I say that there is some justification for asking what means are to be devised to mitigate the effects of drought and famine in the future. Last year we had in India a combination of all the misfortunes which happened in 1897, for the famine was far more wide-reaching and far more disastrous upon India, and during the whole of that time the bubonic plague attacked the nation. With this combination of evils before us, I think it is not unnatural that this House should turn its attention to this question, and ask the noble lord what means he suggested to avoid such evils in the future. Everybody thoroughly understands that you cannot interfere in any way with the atmospheric conditions of India, for you cannot cause rain to fall there by the firing of cannons, and we know that a country like India is exposed at intervals to the ravages of drought. I think that we have a right to draw the right hon. gentleman's attention to this, and to urge him to do all that is possible in this direction in India. We contend that a large portion of this sum which the hon. Member for Camborne has suggested should be repaid to India should be given in the form of a sum to be devoted to means and devices for at any rate mitigating, if not avoiding entirely, the effects of famine in India in the future. Perhaps the House will allow me to read a very short phrase which gives approximately an idea of what has been happening in India. Mr. Vaughan Nash says:—"The distinctive mark of the famine was its three-fold character, the lack of crops, of fodder and of water. To the first cause the rush to the famine works and the terrible sufferings in the villages was due; to the second the loss of cattle, of which millions upon millions perished; whilst the scarcity of water added to the sufferings of the people and their beasts, and paved the way

for the attack of cholera which is still raging through the famine districts. The visitation, therefore, was one of merciless severity. It gave no quarter to any living thing, man, woman, or child; and the beasts in the jungle, the birds whose bright plumage makes the only bit of vivid colour in the brown wilderness of an Indian famine, the patient bullocks who draw the plough and haul the farm produce to the market, the milch cows and the goats and kids perished together. Besides the famine and the diseases following in its train, the plague was busy at work." While all this misery and suffering was going on, we know that the Government of India did all that was in its power to alleviate the ravages of famine by carrying out the famine code, and establishing centres and famine camps. I will not say a word against the Indian officials in this respect. Many of them behaved like heroes. Not a few of them were moved to these acts of devotion when they saw the fortitude and the patience with which the inhabitants of India bore the dreadful losses and suffering laid upon them. Mr. Nash said—and it is a fact—"There was grain enough in India for everyone, and sufficient food for the needs of the cattle, but the people had no money to buy it." Of course that seems in itself self-evident for famine naturally occurs when the people have not got the money to buy food with, but we must remember that the necessities of the Indian people are very small indeed. We know that there are families in India who live on two annas (2d.) per day, and we know that it does not require a very large sum to enable one of the agricultural class in India to maintain life. There are one or two circumstances in connexion with the distribution of relief which I hope the noble lord will be able to explain to the House. In several districts of India during the time of the famine, suspicions—no doubt well grounded—passed through the minds of the officials that there was in connexion with the relief a good deal of either skulking or malingering, or people who placed themselves upon relief without due reason and cause, and in the relief camps in one or two of the Presidencies the minimum amount of relief was reduced. I think myself that this requires some explanation from the noble lord as to why under the circumstances, when famine was raging throughout these districts of India, in some of these places it was found necessary to put certain relief camps upon what are called "deterrent conditions." If the House will allow me, I will read one more extract from Mr. Vaughan Nash's book, for he has travelled through India for the express purpose of giving his own notion of what was going on with regard to the famine. He did not obtain his information from one source alone, and he was accustomed to form an independent opinion, and what he saw with his own eyes is worthy of credence by this House. This extract is in connexion with this "deterrent" element, which was introduced to lessen the number of those who applied for relief. He says:—"The physical condition of the people is steadily deteriorating, and the death-rate has gone up again in the past month. The Gujeratis are accustomed, as a rule, to plenty of food—as plenty is understood in India—and they are unused to working during the heat of the day. The coarse and scanty rations, and the hard work of the famine camps, have fairly knocked them to pieces. It is, perhaps, a question whether the most generous treatment permitted by the famine code would have kept the Gujeratis in anything approaching to fair condition. Here, in Broach, where for some weeks the harshest treatment that I have seen in India was meted out, the state of the people beggars description. The 'deterrent' element, on which the Bombay Government lay such stress, has had full play with a vengeance, but when the history of the famine comes to be summed up, I doubt if the result will be paraded as a success. The net effect of it on the works has been semi-starvation, sickness, and an appalling death-rate, and in the villages, starvation on a wholesale scale amongst the people who were 'deterred,' by the harshness of the tests, from going upon the works. There is a point at which relief becomes a greater evil than misery and privation, and to the mind of the Gujerati this point was reached when the wages on the works were cut down to the skeleton standard. It is too late to repair the damage, now that the test has shown the people to be really and truly famine-stricken, and the buried hoards of grain and ornaments to be figments of the Secretariat's imagination. The rules have, indeed, been relaxed, but the people have lost confidence, and multitudes have been reduced to that awful state in which the body wastes and shrivels, no matter how much food is put into the stomach. The finest wheat and the best champagne would be useless now. And on top of all this a raging visitation of cholera is sweeping the country. Of this final catastrophe I can do no more than give you a colourless sketch. The kites and jackals are gorging themselves, and the air is thick with the stench of the dead, who are dying faster than they can be burned or buried." I am afraid that is rather a long extract, but it is impossible to go into a subject like this without making quotations which run the risk of wearying the House. There may have been a number of those who thought the conditions laid down were very exacting, and this may have kept many people who needed assistance from the camps. I do hope that the noble lord will give us the information which is necessary to explain why this took place. The fact is that the Indian cultivator has for some years, as far as we can judge, been going from bad to worse. In 1882 it was said by Lord Cromer in his Budget speech that the average total income of the Hindoo people was 27 rupees, or 33s. 6d. per head. In 1898-99 it fell to 17 rupees, or 23s. 2d., and I am not sure whether last year the total income in some of these famine districts was not reduced to something like 12 rupees. If in years without a famine the annual income of an agriculturist has fallen, as it has done in the years between 1877 and 1897, by ten rupees, it seems to me that it is highly desirable that what we recommend should be done, and that Commissioners should be appointed, some of them sent out from England, to find out whether greater attention cannot be paid to mitigating these famines. I was very sorry to read that famine again threatens India this year in Gujerat, the Carnatic, etc., etc. I think it is desirable that an enquiry should be made as to what means can be adopted for increasing the wealth and mitigating the misery and obviating famines in the future. I am glad to think that the noble lord himself, on the January 26, 1897, used these words:—"That the opportunity this famine affords ought not to be allowed to pass without our taking every opportunity to enquire into and ascertain the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities." I would also suggest that it would be desirable to go into the question of land tenure, because it seems that recent experience of India proves that our Western ideas of land tenure are not always applicable to India. I am bound to say that from the information I have had from those who are most interested in this question, I have serious doubts upon the point.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. member that the terms of the amendment do not apply to general observations about the finances of India.

MR. SCHWANN: I am only trying, Sir, to suggest some means of employing the sum of money which my hon. friend is asking the Government to transfer. The following quotation is from the preamble of the Government of India's Bill to "amend the law relating to agricultural land in the Punjab": "The expropriation of the hereditary agriculturist in many parts of the province through the machinery of restricted sale and mortgage has been regarded for many years past as a serious political danger. It is recognised that the danger is accompanied with bad economic results, that it is increasing, and that if not arrested it will grow to formidable dimensions. It is also recognised that the idea of a free transferable interest in land which is at the root of the trouble is of comparatively modern origin, and is contrary both to the existing practice in most Native States and to the traditions and sentiments, if no longer to the practice, of the people of the Punjab." This draws attention to one point which it seems to me might be usefully considered by the Government of India. Then, again, a more elastic assessment of taxes has been found to be desirable because by degrees the land is becoming alienated, and getting into the hands of the village money-lenders. Lord Cromer in Egypt has introduced legislation which will have a tendency to free the people from the clutches of the village Shylocks who abound in the country, and some such similar laws seem necessary in India. In the Native Provinces they enjoy a milder system of taxation and they have greater elasticity. It has been said that "the laws of the Native States are laws of leather, while those of British India are of iron." Talking of the alienation of the land which is gradually taking place in the four districts of the Punjab, the following figures will show to what an enormous extent this evil has grown. In the first district in the year 1895, in an area of 120 square miles and a population of 108,000, 20 per cent. of the lands were found in that year alienated to money-lenders. In the second district, containing an area of 349 square miles and a population of 108,000, the percentage of alienated lands was 28. In the third district, containing 333 square miles and a population of 50,000, the percentage was 17; and in the fourth district, with 349 square miles and a population of 30,000 people, the percentage of alienated lands was 11 per cent. I think the greatest stress should be laid upon these facts. I should also like to recommend to the noble lord the question of irrigation. This is a subject in which the Indian Government has always interested itself, but in which I do not think it has quite carried out the recommendations of its own Commission. For example, take the example of the Famine Commission in 1879-80, p. 150, part 2, of the Report says:—"Among the means that may be adopted for giving India direct protection from famine arising from drought, the first place must unquestionably be assigned to works of irrigation. There must be reckoned the direct protection afforded by the saving of human life, by the avoidance of loss of revenue remitted and of the outlay incurred in costly measures of relief. But it is not only in years of drought that they are useful. In seasons of average rainfall they are of great service and a great source to wealth, giving certainty to all agricultural occupations, increasing the out-turn per acre of the crops, and enabling more valuable descriptions of crops to be grown." What has been the action of the Government in the years 1882 to 1898? If I summarise the figures given in the statistical abstracts, I find that the combined totals of railway expenditure for all those years has been £246,000,000, while the total for irrigation only amounts to £39,000,000, leaving a balance in favour of railways as against irrigation of £207,000,000. Everybody must admit that railways are very useful, but at the same time they may convey but they do not produce the food by which millions of the people of India are to be sustained. Irrigation does that in the most ample manner, and I think this House will see the propriety of urging upon the Government of India and the noble lord the necessity of promoting irrigation. Railways are useful to convey grain, but they do not prevent famine. I will quote to the House an extract from the *Standard's* Simla correspondent in reference to what was said by Sir Mackworth Young, the Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab, who has been making a tour of the Provinces. In regard to the Chenab Canal Irrigation works which had just been opened, the Lieut.-Governor made an important speech, of which the following is an extract: "He pointed out that India had just passed through a famine which at one time imposed on the Government the duty of supporting directly upwards of six millions of people. All this time the inhabitants of the Chenab Colony had been living in a tract of country which a few years ago was a waterless desert, utterly dry and barren. Yet the existence of the famine was hardly known to those assembled. The land had brought forth abundantly, the people had lived in peace and plenty; their surplus stocks, which were enormous, being carried off by the railway which the Government had built, to be sold at famine prices in less favoured parts of India." I would like just to refer to the classical case of irrigation works in India, I mean the Godaveri Delta. At one time there were only 150,000 acres which afforded a precarious livelihood to the people, and now there are 700,000 acres producing sure crops. There are now 500 miles of canals which have been found very useful for agricultural purposes. The population previous to irrigation was 600,000, and now it is 2,500,000. I can give other details in regard to revenues, exports, and imports which would show that this country, which was smiling as a rose garden now, was before a desert, and highly unproductive. There is also the question of

technical education which I would also impress as strongly as I can upon the noble lord, for he knows that, through the advance of civilisation, by the railways, and by the free introduction of goods from all parts of the world—from England, Germany, America, and other countries—many of the Native village industries have been swept away, and the result has been that a much larger proportion of the inhabitants of India have been obliged to turn their attention to agriculture. That means, as is the case in Ireland, that there is too great a pressure upon agriculture as a means of livelihood, and the produce is scarcely sufficient to maintain the population. It has been stated that there are millions of people in India who have never known what it is to have their hunger satisfied. I believe that this House contains a great many new Members, and I hope that they will take an interest in Indian debates, for the responsibility rests upon their shoulders quite as much as upon ours. I hope that the suggestion of my hon. friend, the member for Camborne, may be carried out, and that we shall have certain amounts put upon the Estimates so that we may have more frequent opportunities of discussing the affairs of India. These discussions are generally relegated to the dog-days, and the natural result is that many Members of this House do not take that interest in these Indian debates which they should do. Many hon. members of the present Parliament have been out in India and they possess a knowledge of her wants and needs. Therefore, it is highly desirable that they should give the House the benefit of that knowledge and to the best of their ability promote the interests of the millions of their fellow-subjects in that great Empire.

Thursday, February 28.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

COOPERS HILL COLLEGE.

Colonel MILWARD asked the Secretary of State for India whether he could state when the Coopers Hill Papers, which were laid upon the Table in dummy upon February 21, would be ready for distribution.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Papers, I understand, will be delivered to-morrow.

Friday, March 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (North-West Frontier),—Copy presented,—of Papers regarding British relations with the neighbouring Tribes on the North-West Frontier of India and Punjab Frontier Administration [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

THE NEW FRONTIER AGENCY.

Mr. SCHWANN asked the Secretary of State for India whether the sanction of his Majesty's Government had been given to a scheme by which it was proposed to join four or five Provinces peopled with Pathan tribes all outside the Indian border under the same military, political, and revenue administration, as now obtains in four of our own British districts within the borders of India:

And, would the full Papers relating to this scheme be laid before Parliament at an early date.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The papers relating to this subject will be in the hands of Members in a few days, and they will show that the assumptions in the first question of the hon. gentleman are erroneous.

Tuesday March 5.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITIONS.

Officers of the Indian Staff Corps,—Six hundred and fourteen Petitions from officers of the Indian Staff Corps, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

RELIEFS FOR INDIA.

Captain NORTON asked the Secretary of State for War whether he could state what steps, if any, were being taken with reference to the reliefs for India upon the close of the war in South Africa, and also whether anything would be done to compensate the 15,000 men now serving in India beyond the term of their engagement.

Lord STANLEY: Men serving in India who are due for transfer to the Reserve will be replaced by men having four years' unexpired colour service from South Africa and home. It is not proposed to compensate soldiers retained with the colours under the Royal proclamation of October 7, such retention being part of the liability which they accepted in their engagement.

COOPERS HILL COLLEGE.

Mr. O'MARA asked the Secretary of State for India if he could say how long the Board of Visitors took to consider and adopt Colonel Ottley's suggestions to remodel the studies and dismiss the professors of Coopers Hill College:

And, what expert advice did they receive and consider before reporting.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Colonel Ottley's suggestions for the re-arrangement of the course of study at Coopers Hill are dated June 13, 1900, and the Report of the Board upon them is dated the 24th of the same month. The visitors who signed the Report are with scarcely an exception experts of the highest authority upon the technical questions submitted to them and they are selected in order that they may advise as experts.

Mr. O'MARA asked whether the conclusions were come to by the Committee at a single sitting.

Lord G. HAMILTON said that the Committee had the memoranda some time before them. The Report was a long and exhaustive one, but he could not say whether its consideration only occupied one sitting.

Mr. O'MARA: Was not the meeting to consider the Report called for the 24th, and did not the committee report the same day?

No reply was given.

Mr. O'Mara asked the Secretary of State for India if he could state how many visits the Board of Visitors made to Coopers Hill College during 1900.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Several visits were paid to Coopers Hill in 1900 by members of the Board, but I cannot give the exact number.

Mr. O'MARA asked the Secretary of State for India whether he could inform the House who requested Colonel Ottley to prepare a new curriculum of studies and a new time table for Coopers Hill College; and what special qualifications did he have for this work.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Colonel Ottley was informed when he became President that the existing system of instruction was not considered to be satisfactory and required remodelling. Colonel Ottley has an unbroken experience of 25 years' service in India in almost every department of civil engineering, and the special knowledge he thus obtained of the training and capacity of the young engineers working under him from Coopers Hill pre-eminently qualified him to advise as to the special technical training required for the Public Works Department in India.

Mr. O'MARA asked whether he was to understand that the code of regulations, which provided that the Resident should be assisted by the teachers in regulating the course of studies, was not carried out by the present Resident.

Lord G. HAMILTON understood that Colonel Ottley had been in frequent communication with the teachers.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

Mr. HENRY J. WILSON.—Opium,—To call attention to the Indo-Chinese Opium Trade; and to move: That, in the revision of Treaty relations between this country and China, it is desirable to offer to the Chinese Government complete freedom to take such measures, whether by increased taxation or otherwise, as it may judge necessary for the suppression of the Opium Traffic. [*An early day.*]

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will give addresses on Indian questions as follows:—

March 9.—Leighton Park School, Reading, at 8 p.m.

March 10.—Reading: (1) To members of the First Day Adult School, at 9.30 a.m.; (2) to the Castle Street Chapel Pleasant Hour Society, in the Chapel, at 3 p.m.

March 31.—South London Ethical Discussion Society (Surrey Masonic Hall, Camberwell New Road, S.E.) at 11.15 a.m.

Mr. G. P. Pillai has undertaken a series of lectures on Indian questions at the following places:—

March 11.—Tyldesley, Lancashire.
,, 12.—Broadbottom, Cheshire.
,, 13.—Winsford, ,,
,, 14.—Bury, Lancashire.
,, 15.—Darwen, ,,
,, 18.—Leigh, ,,
,, 19.—Cheadle, Cheshire.
,, 20.—Hadfield, Derbyshire.
,, 21.—Andersham, Lancashire.
,, 22.—Heaton Park.
,, 25.—Sheffield.
,, 26.— ,,
,, 27.—Hollingworth.

Other lectures are being arranged.

Mr. J. M. Parikh, barrister-at-law, will address meetings as follows:—

March 12.—Kettering, Northamptonshire.
,, 13.—Loughborough, Leicester.
,, 14.— ,, ,,
,, 15.—Leek, Staffordshire.
,, 27.—Bristol.
,, 28.—Street, Somerset.

On Sunday, February 3, Miss Alison Garland gave an address to the Seedley Congregational Church on "The Famine in India, by One Who Saw It." The Rev. Ambrose Pope conducted the service. There was a crowded congregation.

On February 4 Miss Garland lectured on "My Visit to India," illustrated by 70 limelight views, at Shelf, near Halifax.

On February 5 Miss Garland gave the same lecture at the Lightcliffe Liberal Club; on the 6th at Northowram; and on the 7th at Illingworth. Notwithstanding the snow and ice all these meetings were very well attended, and at most of them collections for the famine were taken.

In the preceding week, Miss Garland addressed a crowded meeting in the Temperance Hall, Leek, on "England's Duty to India." The lecture was illustrated by limelight views.

PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO INDIA.

To be obtained from
THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,
84-85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

Reports of the Proceedings at the Annual Sessions of the Indian National Congress, from the 3rd to the 14th Session. 2s. each, post free.

The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast (Congress Green Book I.), by Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, Bart. (being a series of suggestions for the prevention of famine in India). Post free, 7d.

Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure: Evidence-in-Chief of the Indian Witnesses. (Congress Green Book II.) Post free, 1s. 10d.

The Proposed Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions in India. Memorial to the Secretary of State. With two Appendices. (Congress Green Book III.) Post free, 1s. 2d.

Two Statements presented to the Indian Currency Committee (1898), by Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

Speech by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., in the House of Commons, August 14, 1894, on the Debate on the Indian Budget.
Ditto do. in the House of Commons, February 12, 1895, on the Debate on the Address.
Ditto do. on British Rule in India (1898).

Presidential Address by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Lahore, 1893.

Presidential Address by Mr. A. M. Bose, M.A., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Madras, 1898.

Speeches of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., President of the Indian National Congress, 1894-5.

Valedictory Address of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., delivered at Bombay, January 17, 1895.

Speeches of Mr. D. E. Wacha delivered at the 9th, 11th and 14th Sessions of the Indian National Congress.

Is the Government of India Responsible to Anyone, and if so to Whom? Speech delivered at Croydon by Mr. W. C. BONNERJEE.

The Famine in India. Speeches delivered at a Public Reception to Mr. Vaughan Nash on his return from the Famine Districts, July, 1900.

Mr. A. O. Hume's Farewell to India. Speech delivered at Bombay, 1894.

India Reform Pamphlet IX. The State and Government of India under its Native Rulers. 3d.

The Indian National Congress: its Aims and Justification. By ROBERT KNIGHT.

Indian Politics. A Series of Papers on Important Indian Questions by Prominent Congressmen. Post free, 4s. 4d.

A Needed Reform in the Indian Administration, by ROMESH C. DUTT, C.I.E.

The Bogey of a Russian Invasion. A Lesson from the Tirah Campaign, by Col. H. B. HANNA.

The High Courts and the Collector-Magistrates in India, by J. DACOSTA.

The Government of India and its Reform through Parliamentary Institutions, by J. DACOSTA.

Note on Sir J. Westland's Budget, 1894-5.

Note on the Explanatory Memorandum of the Secretary of State for India, 1894-5.

Note on Sir James Westland's Budget, 1895-6.

Note on Sir H. Waterfield's Tables, 1884-5 to 1894-5.

The Poor Man's Lamb: Famine Insurance for the Masses *versus* Exchange Compensation for the Classes.

REPRINTS FROM "INDIA."

The Judiciary and the Executive in India. Interview with Mr. Manomohan Ghose.

The Bombay Government and Higher Education, by the Hon. C. H. Setalved.

A National Famine Grant. Letter from the London Indian Society to Lord Salisbury, 1900.

India and the General Election (1900).

"Melancholy Meanness."

The "Over-population" Fallacy Again.

No National Contribution?

The "Slimness" of the India Office.

"Mainly a Question of Money."

A Selection of the Publications enumerated above will be forwarded to responsible persons or Associations in the United Kingdom for gratuitous distribution, on written application to the British Committee, Indian National Congress, 84-85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.

To Political Associations and Clubs, Literary Societies, Ethical Societies,

Etc., etc.

LECTURES and ADDRESSES ON INDIAN AFFAIRS.

The British Committee of the Indian National Congress (84 & 85, Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.), is in a position to offer to Political Associations, Literary Societies, Ethical Societies, etc., etc., the services of Indian gentlemen, well qualified to place before an audience the facts relating to the condition of India and its people.

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